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(54) Title: COMMUNICATIONS APPARATUS AND METHOD
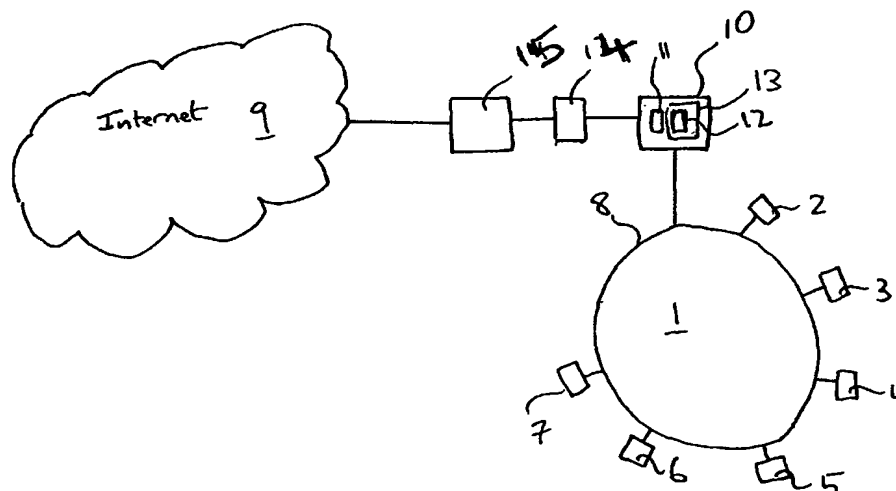
(57) Abstract: A communications apparatus includes a router (10), a network address translator (12) and a connection controller
(11). The connection controller (11) governs the connection from LAN (1) to other networks such as the Internet. The LAN serves
a number of terminals (2 to 7). in the event that the connection controller determines that the link to a particular LAN is not used
it will enter a short term hold process. After a predetermined time has elapsed the connection is broken. However, the short term
hold process can be circumvented by the network translator maintaining a record of the terminal use (or more particularly a port
serving an application on the terminal). In the event that all the terminals are determined as not in use then a message is sent to the
connection controller 11 indicating such and the connection is released. This avoids unnecessary connection cost and also enhances
security of the LAN 1.

SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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